

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8077
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GENEVA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3477

GENEVA FOR AMB YOUNG

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, US, SF, WA
SUBJECT: WESTERN FIVE MEETING WITH FONMIN BOTHA

REF: PRETORIA 3454 AND PREVIOUS (NOTAL)

FIVE AMBASSADORS/CHARGES MET ON SCHEDULE WITH FONMIN BOTHA.
FOLLOWING THE MEETING, WE PREPARED THIS AGREED SUMMARY OF
DISCUSSIONS:

1. AT 1700 TODAY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FIVE MET WITH
FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA, WHO WAS ACCOMPANIED BY BRAND FOURIE,
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FOR ONE HOUR AND 20 MINUTES.

2. WITH REGARD TO THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE, THE INITIAL REACTION
WAS HIGHLY EMOTIONAL, ALTHOUGH AS THE DISCUSSION PROGRESSED
BOTHA ADOPTED A SOMEWHAT MORE BALANCED APPROACH TO THE ISSUES
RAISED. TO OUR SURPRISE, BRAND FOURIE EXPRESSED EVEN MORE
SHOCK THAN BOTHA, ACCUSING US OF VIOLATING THE SPIRIT AND

SUBSTANCE OF UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED IN CAPE TOWN.

3. THE PARTICULAR POINTS THAT TRIGGERED THIS RESPONSE WERE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) THEIR ASSUMPTION THAT PARAGRAPH 6(A) REFLECTED OUR VIEWS RATHER THAN THOSE OF THE INTERESTED PARTIES CONSULTED.

(B) THEIR BELIEF THAT THE LANGUAGE IN 6(A)(2), INDICATING THE NEED FOR DISCUSSION AND AGREEMENT WITH THE FIVE ON THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL'S MANDATE, WENT BEYOND THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED AT THE SECOND CAPE TOWN TALKS.

(C) THE ISSUE WHICH DREW THE MOST HEAT WAS ON THE QUESTION OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS. THEY DENIED HAVING AGREED AT EITHER OF THE CAPE TOWN TALKS TO WITHDRAW TROOPS BEFORE INDEPENDENCE AND ACCUSED THE FIVE OF GOING BEYOND THE UNDERSTANDING EXPRESSED IN THE NON-PAPER OF JUNE 9. IN PARTICULAR, THEY ARGUED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF ELEMENTS OF AUTHORITY REFERRED TO ON PAGE 10 OF THE NON-PAPER DID NOT RELATE SPECIFICALLY TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS BUT TO WITHDRAWAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITIES ONLY. THEY UNDERLINED THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF WITHDRAWING A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF TROOPS GIVEN THE PRESENT LEVEL OF SWAPO ACTIVITY ON THE BORDER.

(D) THEY ALSO TOOK EXCEPTION TO THE LANGUAGE IN THE LAST
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SENTENCE OF PARA 6(B) ARGUING THAT THE UNDERSTANDING REACHED AT THE SECOND CAPE TOWN TALKS WAS THAT THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE WOULD "SATISFY HIMSELF" AND NOT "TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO GUARANTEE". THEY ARGUED THAT THE LANGUAGE IN THE TALKING POINTS WOULD GIVE THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE EXECUTIVE POWERS WHICH HAD NOT BEEN FORESEEN IN THE CAPE TOWN TALKS.

4. IN RESPONDING TO THESE POINTS, WE EMPHASIZED:

(A) THAT IN PARA 6(A) WE WERE REPORTING SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY THE CONTACT GROUP IN THE PROCESS OF BRIEFING OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES. WE WERE NOT GOING BACK ON UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED IN CAPE TOWN;

(B) THAT IT WAS IN EVERYBODY'S INTEREST AND FULLY CONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE CAPE TOWN TALKS TO HAVE A FULL DISCUSSION AND REACH BROAD AGREEMENT ON THE NATURE OF THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL AND THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE BEFORE THESE ARE PROMULGATED. IF WE COULD NOT AGREE ON THESE, THEN WE WERE INEVITABLY HEADING FOR TROUBLE;

(C) THAT WE WERE NOT ASKING FOR AN IMMEDIATE AND TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS AS THEY HAD CONCLUDED BUT RATHER FOR THE PREPARATION OF A PLAN FOR PHASED WITHDRAWAL WHICH WOULD TAKE PLACE PROGRESSIVELY THROUGHOUT THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD BEGINNING WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL. WHILE THE WITHDRAWAL SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY INDEPENDENCE, THIS WAS SUBJECT TO WHATEVER ARRANGEMENTS THE NEW NAMIBIAN GOVERNMENT MIGHT MAKE FOR THE FUTURE. THEY CONTINUED TO ARGUE THAT THEY HAD NEVER AGREED TO THE EARLY WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS AND UNDERTOOK TO GIVE US COPIES OF THEIR TRANSCRIPT OF THE CAPE TOWN DISCUSSION TO PROVE THEIR POINT. WE ARGUED THAT THE SECOND CAPE TOWN NON-PAPER IN REFERRING TO TRANSFER OF POWER AND WITHDRAWAL OF ELEMENTS OF AUTHORITY CLEARLY COVERED BOTH THE TRANSFER OF ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY AND THE WITHDRAWAL

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OF TROOPS;

(D) WE ARE INCLINED TO AGREE WITH THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE LAST SENTENCE OF PARA 6(B) AND RECOMMEND SUBSTITUTING THE WORDS "SHOULD SATISFY HIMSELF AGAINST" FOR THE WORDS "WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS TO GUARANTEE".

5. AT THE END OF THE DISCUSSION, WHICH AT TIMES BECAME FAIRLY HEATED, AND IN THE COURSE OF WHICH BOTHA WENT SO FAR AS TO SAY "IT IS ALL OFF", WE GRADUALLY PERSUADED HIM INTO A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE FRAME OF MIND. AT OUR SUGGESTION, HE AGREED TO STUDY OUR TALKING POINTS IN THE LIGHT OF OUR EXPLANATIONS AND OF THE TEXT OF THE SECOND CAPE TOWN NON-PAPER AND TO MEET WITH US AGAIN BEFORE BRINGING THE PRIME MINISTER INTO THE DISCUSSIONS AS HE AT FIRST SUGGESTED. THIS WILL ALLOW FOR A MORE REFLECTIVE EXAMINATION OF OUR TALKING POINTS AND FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE INTENT AND SCOPE OF THE SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED THEREIN. IN PARTICULAR, WE PRESSED THEM TO REACT CONSTRUCTIVELY AND QUICKLY TO THE NOMINATION OF AHTISAARI.

6. FOLLOWING THE CLARIFICATION OF ISSUES THAT A LATER MEETING HOPEFULLY WILL LEAD TO, WE AGREED TO MEET WITH THE PRIME MINISTER. WE REPEATEDLY URGED ON BOTHA AND FOURIE THAT THEY SHOULD NOT PRESENT OUR PROPOSALS TO THE PRIME MINISTER IN A HOSTILE FASHION BUT SHOULD URGE ACCEPTANCE OF AS MANY POINTS AS THEY COULD. WE TOOK STRONG EXCEPTION TO ACCUSATIONS THAT WE WERE INDULGING IN "SALAMI TACTICS". WE INSISTED THAT WE CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THE SAME GOOD FAITH WHICH HAD CHARACTERIZED BOTH SIDES IN THE CAPE TOWN TALKS.

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